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JANUARY-MARCH

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Burnet Woods, - Cincinnati, Ohio

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HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL
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Cincinnati, Ohio

So numerous was the concourse of adventurers to this point that in two days after his arrival sixty-three boats were ready to sail in company. A part of these boats were occupied by families; another by young men descending the river to explore the country, and the remaining portion by the cattle belonging to the emigrants.

The number of fighting men on board probably amounted to nearly a thousand. My father had been a practiced soldier in the former wars of the country and had been stationed for three years at Pittsburgh. He was, of course, versed in the modes, requisites and stratagems of Indian warfare.

A number of his associates had been trained in the same way. The descending boats were arranged in an order of defense, not, perhaps, entirely according to the technical exactness of a fleet in line of battle. Pilot boats headed the advance. The boats manned by the young men sustained each wing, having the family boats in the center and the stock boats immediately in the rear of them, and the rear guard boats floating still behind them. The boats moved with great circumspection, floating onwards, until they were abreast of a place favorable for furnishing range and grazing for the cattle, when they landed and turned them loose for this purpose. While their cattle were thus foraging in the joy of their short emancipation from the close prison of the boats, their owners kept a vigilant watch outside of their range to prevent the savages from assaulting them.

We arrived without molestation at Limestone, now Maysville. Captain Hinkston, of our company, with three or four other families, concluded to remain here. They immediately commenced the customary preparations for rearing cabins. We tarried with them but half a day, during which time a company from our number turned out to hunt in the wild woods. The party killed several buffaloes, and I now for the first time tasted their flesh. At 10 o'clock the next morning, April 12th, 1780, the pilot boats gave signals that the enemy were drawn up in hostile array on the northern or what was called the Indian shore of the Ohio. Three boats immediately landed in a concerted order half a mile above the foe. It was arranged that half the fighting men should be in readiness to spring to the shore the moment the boats should touch the land; they were then to form and march down upon the Indian

encampment. The Indians were encamped opposite Licking, where Front street now intersects Broadway in Cincinnati. Their number did not much exceed 150, whereas we numbered nearly 500. Discovering a force so much superior moving rapidly upon them, they fled in so much haste and disorder as to leave part of their movables behind them. Our party pursued them four or five miles up what is now called Mill Creek. Some of the Indians were on horseback and they fled faster than their wearied pursuers could follow them on foot.

We returned to our boats and floated unmolested to Beargrass, at the Falls of Ohio. We arrived on the 15th of April. After surveying the vicinity my father selected a place five miles back from the river. It was a large body of land of extreme fertility, and in the center of it was a fine spring. Here he encamped and commenced clearing. In a short time he was joined by more than forty families. In a fortnight they had built as many cabins, in four straight lines, so as to form a hollow square. At the angles were block houses. The cabin doors all opened into the hollow square. In the center of one of the sides, leading to the spring, was a large gateway, and one of the same dimensions to match on the opposite side. The planks of the boats in which they had descended the river were wagoned out from the river to furnish floors and doors for these dwellings. Through the walls were portholes from which, in case of attack, they fired upon the foe.

Thus sheltered and defended, their next object was gardens and fields. A small reserve remained in the enclosure and were stationed on the tops of the houses to survey the scene of operations and give notice of approaching danger. The new settlement suffered little annoyance till June, when Indian hostilities, manifested in the customary way, broke out on every side. In some instances they were successful in breaking up whole stations, and in others they were severely chastised, as in the expedition undertaken against them by George Rogers Clark.

This punishment restrained them a sufficient interval of peace to enable us to gather in our crops of corn. We witnessed with astonishment the results of a virgin soil that had never been cultivated. The extent of ground cultivated by each individual was necessarily small. Some of the settlers had the curiosity to measure the amount of corn gathered from an acre. It ranged from

eighty to one hundred and twenty bushels. Most of the immigrants had removed from a thin and barren soil which required assiduous cultivation even for small crops which it yielded. Here the horn of plenty seemed to be emptied almost spontaneously. They had generally come also from a much severer climate. The inclemency of the former winter had led them to prepare for a winter similar to that of the country from which they had emigrated. They made careful and laborious preparations for the severe weather, such as plastering the chasms of their cabins, gathering fuel, etc. But to their agreeable surprise there were but three days that might be denominated freezing weather, during the winter. These days were in the middle of January. For the rest the weather exhibited every variety of aspect that all the climates of the world could show, among which were frequent showers, thunder and lightning. This, it will be recollected, was the winter of 1780 and '81. It very much resembled the present winter (1828), except that we have had more cold days and not so many thunder showers.

In the spring of 1781, realizing the continual exposure of the family and the risk of his fine stock of cattle and horses, my father determined to move farther into the interior of Kentucky. Accordingly, he moved an hundred miles into the interior to Kincaid's Station, near where the town of Danville now stands.

That part of the country was filling rapidly with settlers from Virginia, who passed through what was then called the "Southern Wilderness Road." Although we felt ourselves much more secure here than in the position which we had left, the country beginning already to have an interior and frontier, we often experienced annoyance even here. The Indians frequently made inroads as far as to our present station, killing the cattle, stealing horses, and sometimes murdering the inhabitants.

I pass over the expedition of General Clark against the Indians, in which a number of their towns were destroyed, and the severe retaliation which they practiced along with their allies, the British: and also the bloody affair of the Blue Licks, and return to matters personal to my father's family. The gloom created by that disastrous conflict was diffused over all the country. All those who were not bound to it by ties of family made haste to escape from it, and in ten days scarcely more than three hundred

effective men were left in the country. But this extreme alarm soon passed away. The settlements were consolidated by joining the weaker to the stronger. The block houses were more strongly fortified, and the people, attached to their rural abundance and their peculiar ways of life, determined to remain where they were and defend themselves to extremities. In the subsequent autumn many adventurers joined us from the old settlements. The army of Lord Cornwallis had just surrendered to General Washington, and the American soldiers and their enterprising officers, disengaged from service by that event, flocked to this fertile wilderness. In the course of the next year we became more formidable than before. Although the Indian war still continued, the security inspired by numbers induced many families that had been painfully cooped up in close stations, to leave their enclosures and to disperse themselves on detached farms over the country.

In 1784 my father moved to Lexington and raised a crop on what are the out-lots of the present town. My father was entitled to a bounty of 3,000 acres of land, a little above the upper Blue Licks, in consequence of services rendered as a Captain in what was called the French War. It had been surveyed, but he wished to survey it more accurately. Accordingly, he made all the minute preparations requisite in such cases. I prevailed on him to allow me to accompany him. Accordingly, our party, well mounted, proceeded through the forest for the tract. We took along with us a number of led horses, according to custom in such cases, in order to bring a sufficiency of buffalo meat to serve the family during the subsequent winter. Our travel was laborious, for we were obliged to make our way through a thick canebrake. On the evening of the second day's journey we encamped on what my father believed to be his tract of land.

Our first business was to retrace the lines of the former survey. Our next was to hunt buffaloes and the other wild game of the country for subsistence. I was then fourteen years old, and my training in the mode of backwoods life, as well as inclination and practice, had given me a dexterity and closeness in the use of the rifle equal to the expertest Kentuckian of my years. We saw numerous traces of the animals of our search on every side. We performed an operation for our horses to prevent their escape, technically called in the Western country "hobbling," and with

this precaution left them to pasture in the canebrake. We suspended our baggage on the trees, to place it out of the reach of the wolves. We divided into three parties of pairs. My father and myself formed one. We had not advanced more than five miles from the point of separation before we discovered a gang of buffaloes feeding. My father paused, according to the necessary precautions, to observe the direction of the wind, ordering me to get to leeward of them. My orders were to shoot the blackest of the herd behind the shoulders. The expected consequence was that at the report of my gun the herd would turn and make toward him, when he calculated to be able to bring down another as they passed. I obeyed my instructions to the letter; but in the act of taking aim, scent of me probably reached them. My ball penetrated the body of the animal farther back than I intended, and he ran some distance before he fell. They did not take the direction which my father anticipated, and, although he eagerly pursued them for some distance, he failed in obtaining a shot. I recharged, pursued, and came up with my father, who had halted where the buffalo that I had brought down laid. The remainder of the herd escaped us. The animal was so wounded that it would soon die. For convenience my father determined to remove our camp to the buffalo. I had often killed bears, deer, and turkeys, but never a buffalo before. It may be imagined how much a boy of fourteen would be elated by such an exploit. My father proposed to test my backwoods discipline by requesting me to lead the way through the forest to the camp, distant six miles. I was in the frame of mind to express confidence in my ability to do it, even were the camp distant forty miles. I preceded him at a brisk walk until we came in sight of the camp. I saw a smile on my father's countenance, which I interpreted to be one of approbation of my skill. My father here beckoned me to stand, informing me that it was necessary to take a keen survey of the premises to ascertain whether savages might not be concealed about the camp awaiting our return. He then preceded me, walking softly, and with great caution inspecting every point in advance and behind us. Having convinced himself that there was no ambush on that side, he made a circuit and explored the other side of the camp in the same way. Having convinced ourselves that no enemy lurked around, we advanced to the fire, spread our blankets on the ground, and threw

ourselves on them for repose. He then admonished me of the necessity of untiring vigilance, reminding me that the danger from the wily foe was often greatest at the moment when the parties felt themselves most secure. He then directed me to keep a keen lookout on the north side of the camp, while he would do the same in regard to the south.

A stratagem was practiced upon us on this occasion which had well nigh proved fatal to the party practicing it. We had not been long on our mutual watch before I discovered a man lurking in advance toward the camp, keeping a tree between him and myself in order to screen his body from view. We reclined our feet toward the fire. My rifle was carefully loaded, the muzzle resting on a log at our heads. At first I supposed it to be one of our own men, and I determined to be farther satisfied before I alarmed my father. I discovered in a moment that he was approaching me with too much caution for that supposition; that he carefully inspected everything around us, and made his way with a soft and stealthy step. I allowed him to approach near enough to a tree at which he was aiming, to enable me to clearly discover that his face was blacked and that he wore no hat. I had hitherto remained motionless, and I was convinced he had not yet seen me. I cocked my rifle. Even this slight noise aroused my father, who lay with his back to mine, looking in a contrary direction. He asked me what I was doing. I informed him I was watching an Indian who was lurking toward us, apparently to fire upon us, and that I was waiting until he should reach a tree, toward which he was stealing, and expose his head so that I might give him a fatal shot. He asked me if I saw more than one, to which I answered in the negative. He then directed me to be sure of my aim, and not to fire until I should have gained sight of a mark in his eye. The person had now gained his tree, and had now rested his gun in a position to fire upon us. But as we reclined flat on the ground, and as a log in some measure protected our bodies from his fire, it was necessary for him to survey us closely in order to find any part of our bodies sufficiently exposed to receive his shot. This I comprehended from his movements, and waited my own opportunity. In putting his head from behind the tree for this close inspection, he exposed half of it. I took aim and drew the trigger, but the gun missed fire. The person, hearing the noise, instantly jerked back

his head. "I am sorry for that," said my father in a low tone of voice, and I replied in vexation that it was the first time it had failed me. It was two minutes before the person exposed his head for a second survey of us. He once more showed his face, so as almost to give me a shot at him. He finally presented two-thirds of his face, and my gun missed fire a second time. Hearing this more distinctly than the first snapping, he again jerked back his head and exclaimed, "Why, I believe you have been snapping at me!" I immediately recognized the voice to be that of Crawford, one of our men. He had thrown off his hat and blacked his face, as he informed us, with a view to frighten me. We were both provoked at this wanton folly, and I assured him that I still had a good mind to shoot him. My father severely reprimanded him, and I remarked with astonishment upon the circumstance that my rifle had twice missed fire. To show him the extent of his exposure, I pointed to a white spot on the tree behind which he had been concealed. I observed to him that it was not larger than his eye, and that I would demonstrate to him what his fate would have been in case my gun had not missed fire. I presented, and my ball carried the bark of the white spot into the tree.

The other men soon after came in. We immediately saddled our horses, mounted, and moved off to the place where our buffalo laid. We encamped there for the night and feasted upon the choice pieces of the animal. I found myself ill during the night, and in the morning my father discovered that I had the measles and that they appeared on my face. He proposed, in consequence, to take me home. It was distant nearly seventy miles, and I was unwilling to interrupt the business for which he had come out, in this way, and I so informed him, proposing to return alone. He replied that it would be necessary for me to sleep out at least two nights alone, and that I might become worse on the journey. I answered that I had no apprehensions of the kind and that it would not be the first time I had spent nights alone in the woods. In reply my father renewed his objections, pointing out the additional dangers from the Indians on such a long way. But I overcame all his objections and was allowed to start off alone. It was a long excursion through a wilderness which apprehension had too much reason to people with savages. I had the measles, and was but fourteen years old. But such was the training of the youths of that period in the woods.

I commenced my journey, stopping twice the first day to let my horse feed upon the grass. I took care to select a spot in the open woods, where I could survey the country for a great distance around me. I saw abundance of game on my way, but having no use for it, and being charged by my father to make no unnecessary delay, I allowed it to pass unmolested. At nightfall I struck a considerable stream. It was easily fordable. Thinking if any enemy came on my track it would be easy to baffle him here, I rode up the middle of the stream half a mile and ascended a branch that fell into the stream two or three hundred yards. I then left the branch and rode on a mile to a tree top which afforded plenty of dry wood. I dismounted, hobbled my horse to feed for the night, kindled me a bright fire, used some of my provisions, laid myself down to sleep, thinking as little about the measles and my lonely situation as possible.

The next morning I started at early dawn, expecting to reach home that night. At 10 o'clock I discovered a very large bear in my course. The temptation to give the animal a shot was irresistible to one of my years and inclinations. I dismounted and killed the animal. Although I could make no use of the carcass, I determined to carry home the skin as a trophy. I found it a difficult business, in the first place, to arrange the large, heavy and greasy hide so that it could be carried on horseback. It so frequently slipped from under me that I found I must either leave it or tarry out another night. I concluded on the latter. I had considerable fever during this night, and did not sleep much. I set off in the morning with the first twilight and reached Lexington at noon the next day. I was nearly recovered. In ten days afterwards my father and his party returned.

Early in the spring of 1785, my father, with my brother and myself, went out to his lands, sixteen miles from Lexington, and erected a couple of cabins. He then moved his family there and commenced clearing the lands. But in a few days we discovered traces of Indians in our vicinity. As it was an unprotected frontier establishment, my father deemed it necessary to enclose his cabin in a stockade. It was done with three lines of palisades, the cabins making the fourth side. During the year we were not much annoyed by the Indians. But the next summer they took from us thirteen fine horses at one time. We raised a party and pursued

them. We came in sight of them just as they had completed swimming the horses over to a sandbank on the opposite side of the Ohio. When they discovered us they exclaimed from the opposite shore that we were too late and might go home again. We had the comfort of exclaiming back again that they were thieving rascals, and asking them if they were not ashamed of what they had been doing. They replied, with great coolness, not at all; that a few horses now and then was all the rent they obtained of us for their Kentucky lands. They outnumbered us three to one, and of course we had no other prudent course but to follow that of their advising and return home without our horses.

It was in the autumn of this year that General Clark raised the forces for the Wabash expedition. They constituted a numerous corps. Colonel Logan was detached from the army, at the Falls of the Ohio, to raise a considerable force with which to proceed against the Indian villages on the head waters of Mad River and the Great Miami. I was then aged sixteen, and too young to come within the legal requisition. But I offered myself as a volunteer, hoping to find and reclaim my father's horses. I need not relate the circumstances of the failure of General Clark's expedition. Colonel Logan went on to his destination, and would have surprised the Indian towns against which he marched had not one of his men deserted to the enemy, not long before they reached the towns, who gave notice of their approach. As it was, he burned eight large towns and destroyed many fields of corn. He took seventy or eighty prisoners and killed twenty warriors, and among them the head chief of the nation. This last act caused deep regret, humiliation and shame to the commander and his troops.

We came in view of the two first towns, one of which stood on the west bank of Mad River, and the other on the northeast of it. They were separated by a prairie half a mile in extent. The town on the northeast was situated on a high, commanding point of land that projected a small distance into the prairie, at the foot of which eminence broke out several fine springs. This was the residence of the famous chief of the nation. His flag was flying, at the time, from the top of a pole sixty feet high. We had advanced in three lines, the commander with some of the horsemen marching at the head of the center line, and the footmen in their rear. Colonel Robert Patterson commanded the left, and I think Colonel

Thomas Kennedy the right. When we came in sight of the towns the spies of the front guard made a halt and sent a man back to inform the commander of the situation of the two towns. He ordered Colonel Patterson to attack the towns on the left bank of Mad River. Colonel Kennedy was also charged to incline a little to the right of the town, on the east side of the prairie. He determined himself to charge with the center division immediately on the upper town. I heard the commander give his orders and caution the Colonels against allowing their men to kill any among the enemy that they might suppose to be prisoners. He then ordered them to advance, and as soon as they should discover the enemy to charge upon them. I had my doubts touching the propriety of some parts of the arrangements. I was willing, however, to view the affair with the diffidence of youth and inexperience. At any rate, I determined to be at hand to see all that was going on and to be as near the head of the line as my Colonel would permit. I was extremely solicitous to try myself in battle. The commander at the head of the center line waved his sword over his head as a signal for the troops to advance. Colonel Daniel Boone and Major (since General) Kenton commanded the advance, and Colonel Trotter the rear. As we approached within half a mile of the town on the left and about three-fourths from that on the right, we saw the savages retreating in all directions, making for the thickets, swamps and high prairie grass to secure them from their enemy. I was animated with the energy with which the commander conducted the head of his line. He waved his sword and in a voice of thunder exclaimed, "Charge from right to left."

The horses appeared as impatient for the onset as their riders. As we came up with the flying savages I was disappointed, discovering that we should have little to do. I heard but one savage, with the exception of the chief, cry for quarter. They fought with desperation as long as they could raise knife, gun or tomahawk, after they found that they could not screen themselves. We despatched all the warriors that we overtook, and sent the women and children prisoners to the rear. We pushed ahead, still hoping to overtake a larger body, where we might have something like a general engagement. I was mounted on a very fleet gray horse. Fifty of my companions followed me. I had not advanced more than a mile before I discovered some of the enemy running along

the edge of a thicket of hazel and plum bushes. I made signs to the men in my rear to come on. At the same time pointing to the flying enemy, I obliqued across the plain so as to get in advance of them. When I arrived within fifty yards of them I dismounted and raised my gun. I discovered at this moment some men of the right wing coming up on the left. The warrior I was about to shoot held up his hand in token of surrender, and I heard him order the other Indians to stop. By this time the men behind had arrived and were in the act of firing upon the Indians. I called to them not to fire—that the enemy had surrendered. The warrior that had surrendered to me came walking toward me, calling his women and children to follow him. I advanced to meet him with my right hand extended. But before I could reach him the men of the right wing of our force had surrounded him. I rushed in among their horses. While he was giving me his hand several of our men wished to tomahawk him. I informed them they would have to tomahawk me first. We led him back to the place where his flag had been. We had taken thirteen prisoners. Among them were the chief, his three wives, one of them a young and handsome woman, another the famous grenadier squaw, upwards of six feet high, and two or three fine young lads.* The rest were children. One of these lads was a remarkably interesting youth of about my own age and size. He clung closely to me and appeared keenly to notice everything that was going on.

When we arrived at the town a crowd of our men pressed around us to see the chief. I stepped aside to fasten my horse, and my prisoner lad clung to my side. A young man of the name of Curner had been to one of the springs to drink. He discovered the young savage by my side and came running toward me. The young Indian supposed he was advancing to kill him. As I turned round, in the twinkling of an eye he let fly an arrow at Curner, for he was armed with a bow. I had just time to catch his arm as he discharged the arrow. It passed through Curner's dress and grazed his side. The jerk I gave his arm undoubtedly prevented the arrow from killing Curner on the spot. I took away the remainder of his arrows and sternly reprimanded him. I then led him back to the crowd which surrounded the prisoners. At the

* Sister of Cornstalk, who fell at Point Pleasant.

some moment Colonel McGary, the same man who had caused the disaster at the Blue Licks some years before, came riding up. General Logan had just then given orders to dispose of the prisoners in one of the houses and place a guard over them, and had reined his horse around when his eye caught that of McGary. "Colonel McGary," said he, "you must not molest these prisoners." "I will see to that," said McGary in reply. I forced my way through the crowd to the chief with my young charge by the hand. McGary ordered the crowd to open and let him in. He came up to the chief, and the first salutation was the question, "Were you at the defeat of the Blue Licks?" The Indian, not knowing the meaning of the words or not understanding the purport of the question, answered, "Yes." McGary instantly seized an axe from the hands of the grenadier squaw and raised it to make a blow at the chief. I threw up my arm to ward off the blow. The handle of the axe struck me across the left wrist and came near breaking it. The axe sunk into the head of the chief to the eyes, and he fell dead at my feet.* Provoked beyond measure at this wanton barbarity, I drew my knife with the purpose to avenge his cruelty by despatching him. My arm was arrested by one of our men, which prevented my inflicting the thrust. McGary escaped from the crowd. The officer at that moment came up with his guards, ordering the men to open the crowd, and desiring the prisoners to follow him to the guardhouse. The lad that was my prisoner caught my hand and held fast to me. I walked with them to the guardhouse, into which they were ordered. A strong guard was placed around the house. Other prisoners were brought in until the house was nearly filled. A detachment was then ordered off to two other towns, distant six or eight miles. The men and prisoners were ordered to march down to the lower town and encamp. As we marched out of the upper town we fired it, collecting a large pile of corn for our horses, and beans, pumpkins, etc., for our own use. I told Captain Stucker, who messed with me, that I had seen several hogs running about the town which appeared to be in good order, and that I thought a piece of fresh pork would relish well with our stock of vegetables. He readily

* The name of the Indian chief killed by McGary was Moluntha, the great statesman of the Shawnees.

assenting to it, we went in pursuit of them ; but as orders had been given not to shoot unless at an enemy, after finding the hogs we had to run them down on foot until we got near enough to tomahawk them. Being engaged at this for some time before we killed one, while Captain S. was in the act of striking the hog I cast my eye along the edge of the woods that skirted the prairie and saw an Indian coming along with a deer on his back. The fellow happened to raise his head at that moment, and, looking across the prairie to the upper town, saw it all in flames. At the same moment I spoke to Stucker in a low voice that there was an Indian coming. In the act of turning my head around to speak to Stucker, I discovered Hugh Ross, brother-in-law to Colonel Kennedy, at the distance of about sixty or seventy yards, approaching us. I made a motion with my hand to Ross to squat down ; then, taking a tree between myself and the Indian, I slipped somewhat nearer him to get a fairer shot, when at the instant I raised my gun past the tree, the Indian being about one hundred yards distant, Ross' ball whistled by me so close that I felt the wind of it, and struck the Indian on the calf of one of his legs. The Indian that moment dropped his deer and sprang into the high grass of the prairie. All this occurred so quickly that I had not time to draw a sight on him before he was hid by the grass. I was provoked at Ross for shooting when I was near enough to have killed him. And now the consequence would be that some of our men would probably lose their lives, as a wounded Indian would give up only with his life. Accordingly, Captain Irwin at that moment rode up with his troop of horse and asked me where the Indian was. I pointed as nearly as I could to the spot where I last saw him in the grass, cautioning the Captain, if he missed him the first charge, to pass on out of his reach before he wheeled to recharge, or the Indian would kill some of his men in the act of wheeling. Whether the Captain heard me I cannot say ; at any rate, the warning was not attended to, for after passing the Indian a few steps, Captain Irwin ordered his men to wheel and recharge across the woods, and in the act of executing the movement, the Indian raised up and shot the Captain dead on the spot, still keeping below the level of the grass so as to deprive us of an opportunity to put a bullet through him. The troop charged again, but the Indian was so active that he had darted into the grass some

rods from where he had fired at Irwin, and they again missed him. By this time several footmen had got up. Captain Stucker and myself had taken each of us a tree that stood out in the edge of the prairie among the grass, when a Mr. Stafford came up and put his head first past one side and then the other of the tree I was behind. I told him not to expose himself that way or he would get shot in a moment. I had hardly expressed the last word when the Indian again raised up out of the grass. His gun, Stucker's and my own, with four or five behind us, all cracked at the same instant. Stafford fell at my side, while we rushed on the wounded Indian with our tomahawks. Before we got him despatched he had made ready the powder in his gun, and a ball in his mouth, prepared for a third fire, with bullet holes in his breast that might all have been covered with a man's open hand. We found with him Captain Beasley's rifle, the Captain having been killed near the Lower Blue Licks a few days before the army passed through that place on their way to the towns.

Next morning General Logan ordered another detachment to attack a town that lay seven or eight miles to the north or north-west of where we then were. On our way up we discovered an Indian on horseback at some distance ahead of us, who at that moment wheeled his horse and rode off under the whip. A small party pursued him and run him past five horses he had tied to a tree in a thicket of woods. They returned with the horses just as we were approaching the town, when we saw two Indians coming out of one of the houses, jump on their horses that had been standing hitched to a post. Three of us took after them. Our Captain halloosed after us not to pursue further than the woods across the prairie; but, finding the woods open and clear of underbrush, we kept up the pursuit, aware that we could see Indians in open woods as soon as they could see us. We had been gaining on them all the time, and as I was on a fleet horse, and a lighter rider than the other two. I had kept from fifty to sixty yards ahead of my companions, when jumping a log, my saddle girth broke, and my saddle, of course, gave way. I, however, alighted on my feet, and immediately fired at one of the Indians, then at about fifty yards distance. I saw in a moment that he had been struck. The other men coming up sprang off their horses, and both fired at the other Indian, the one I had shot at having left his horse and taken to a

swamp just on his right, into which he was followed by the other Indian, who, I was satisfied, was also wounded.

In 1807, I was in that part of the country, and Isaac Zane showed me the very place where his cabin stood at the time, it being now rotted down, adding, that in about five minutes after the report of the first rifle the Indian it had been fired at came running to his cabin with a shot in his shoulder which made him a cripple in his right arm for life. Zane was then married to a squaw, and had at the place his wife and several children at the time. We then returned with the Indians' horses and one or both of their guns, setting fire to the town and a large block house that the English had built there of a huge size and thickness, and so returned that evening to the main body. But from the hard riding, and my horse drinking too freely when overheated, together with eating too much Indian corn, he became so badly foundered that I despaired of getting him home.

On our return to camp, it being late in the evening, we had only time to swallow a mouthful of food before orders issued from headquarters to strike our tents and march in fifteen minutes. It was then dark, but the moon, which was near the full, gave light occasionally as she burst from behind some dark cloud. Our course led us across the prairies, and as we had to retrace the ground on which our columns had marched, we found a well-beaten road, which was a great advantage at night. The Captain I had selected on joining the army was James McDowell, a fine, manly, noble-hearted fellow. He came to me just as the army was moving off their encampment and suggested to me that I had better get my horse as near the front as possible; that he would travel better in the center line, as that was an old worn path and better beaten than either of the side lines, and fall in directly in rear of the front guard, before the prisoners, and he would send Ensign Smith to assist me. I profited by his friendly advice, and Mr. Smith and myself moved up to where the front guard had halted, where we remained for a moment, when we heard the well-known, tremendous voice of Logan almost half a mile in the rear, "Move on in front." We instantly obeyed the order. I directed Smith to whip up my foundered horse, while I led or rather dragged him after me. Our course led down the prairies, and was seldom interrupted by any of the dark forests on either

side. I discovered before we had marched far that our lines were too far extended, and heard the same hoarse, deep voice about a mile in the rear, muttering like a heavy roll of distant thunder, "Rear guard, move up; why these vacancies in your lines?" As we found the voice approaching we quickened our steps, and in a short time got to the guard having charge of the prisoners immediately in my rear. "Why, sir, do you suffer this vacant space between the prisoners and the front guard?" "Some of the squaws have children to carry, and are not able to march faster," replied the officer of the guard. "Change them, then, with those on horseback, sir, and do not let me have to repeat to you to force them to the front." I had suffered my foundered brute to occupy no more space than the length of the rifle that laid on his left shoulder, when turning round my head a little rearwards, I discovered *that Goliath* approaching, growling all the time, on an animal resembling an elephant for size more than a horse. He was just then in the act of bringing down the flat of his tremendous sword on the back of my poor foundered animal, and repeating it three or four times. "Damn you, what brought you here in front of the prisoners with your horse?" approaching me as he waved his sword; "you merit this more than your horse." I could stand this no longer, but brought my gun to my shoulder, sprung my double trigger and leveled at him. Smith sprang forward like lightning, and threw up the muzzle, exclaiming, "For God's sake, don't kill the General!" General Logan wheeled to the right about, and appeared, after moving a few paces, to come to a halt. Smith advanced to him and explained the cause, adding, "This is a young man in your army—is a volunteer, and has gone through more fatigue service this day than any other man in the line. His horse has been foundered from two long and severe chases after Indians to-day, and Captain McDowell, to whose command he belongs, directed him to take the position he did, as his horse would not be able to travel in the rear."

"I knew nothing of this before, sir, and am sorry that I was so severe. I will go and speak to him, for he appears to be a choice spirit." The General, accompanied by Ensign Smith, overtook me. "My young soldier," said the General, "I am sorry I treated you so harshly. I had ordered the prisoners and wounded men, with their guards, to take their position near the advance guard in

the center column, and was astonished when I came up to find a crippled horse between them, but, on explanation, I am convinced you were only obeying your Captain's orders." I replied, "Young as I may be in the service and discipline, I feel proud in saying that I never disobeyed the order of a superior officer, and when I have, as I believe, done my duty, I will not permit even the Commander-in-Chief to *run over me* with impunity." "I like your spirit, my young volunteer; that is manly and noble. Incline to the left and resume your position. The center line is the best road for your lame horse, and, as soon as we halt for the night, call on me at headquarters." I did as directed, and after about two hours' march we came to a point of woods which projected some distance into the prairie, out of which issued one of those pure and living branches of Mad River, where we encamped for the night. I led my horse directly to the creek, when I got him into the water about knee deep, and tied his bridle to a swinging limb, so that he could not led his head down. I laid down my knapsack, and struck fire while the men collected wood, and had just got the fire to burn when Captain McDowell came up and asked me how I got on with my lame horse. I told him pretty well, though he was remarkably stiff and lame. "Yes, Smith tells me, also, that the General wanted to turn you out of the road." "I am sorry Mr. Smith said anything on the subject, as I wished it to remain between ourselves." "Well," said Captain McD., "if Smith had not turned the muzzle of your piece aside it would have leaked out ten miles back, I expect. But come," said he, "and we will see the General. He knows more of you now, and probably likes you better than at the moment."

We found the General giving some orders respecting the wounded and prisoners, which done, Captain McDowell observed, "General Logan, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Lytle, a young volunteer soldier of yours." The fire burned bright, and he had a full view of my face. As he extended his hand, he said, "I believe my young volunteer and I had a slight interview not more than ten miles back," smiling as he spoke and grasping my hand cordially; "we were then in the dark; I am now glad to see him and his Captain at my fire." The General from that time till his death treated me as kindly as a father would his son.

When I got home I found Mr. Robert Todd had arrived a few

moments before me, from Clark's expedition up the Wabash. He informed me of the men's mutinying and returning home at the very moment the troops expected an engagement with the enemy, which reduced Clark's forces so much that it would have been impolitic to have risked an action with the handful of men who remained, so the remnant returned home.

I went frequently to see my young Indian acquaintance and share with him whatever I might have to eat; but we parted at Limestone, when we crossed the Ohio River, and I did not see him for almost a year after, when I met him at Danville, on his being sent home to his nation from that place. The General gave him his own name of Logan, by which he ever afterwards went.

In the course of the next spring the Indians became troublesome, and we were much exposed in going out to the fields or the woods. To add to the difficulty, they set fire to one of the houses in the dead of night. This was the storehouse where our saddles, bridles, horse gears, tools and provisions were secured. By this stratagem they no doubt expected we should open the front gate to get water to put out the fire, when they would rush in, and, guided by the light, readily shoot down and tomahawk the inmates, whom they supposed would be thrown into confusion, between the enemy and the devouring element. But the kind care of an overruling Providence directed otherwise. By the signs we had discovered in the woods for several days my father had apprehended an attack, and had already sent off an express for a reinforcement. That very night the reinforcement, consisting of a party of about sixty men, arrived some three hours before the house was discovered to be on fire. Having made a forced march of several hours, they were considerably fatigued, and slept very soundly. My father, brother and myself had committed the watching to hired laborers, being ourselves exhausted with standing sentries all night for a week previously, and were also asleep. But, as I always awake at the slightest noise, the first crackling of the fire disturbed me, and with my rifle in hand, which always lay by my side in apprehended danger, I sprang to the nearest port-hole. On looking out as far as I was enabled to see, I discovered a great light, and judged instantly that some of the houses must be on fire. The men were immediately posted around the pickets inside the fort, with a strong guard at the gate, and six men were

detached to the lofts of each cabin to keep in check such enemies as might attack the rear of the fort, and ten or twelve prepared to put out the fire. While these arrangements were making, my father awoke, hearing the alarm, and, springing from his bed, rushed with all his force against the door of the building that was on fire, burst the lock, and pitched directly into the flames. At this time I was on the pickets to gain the roof of the burning building, but seeing his imminent danger, I sprang to his rescue and dragged him out of the flames, the clothes of both taking fire, which was, however, put out by some of the company dashing buckets of water over us. Three or four of us then succeeded in getting the roof off and tearing the building down to the second floor. In the meantime the Captain of our reinforcing party had guarded every point of defence in so masterly a manner that the Indians, seeing we were so well prepared for them, did not dare to fire upon us, and drew off their party as quietly and secretly as it had advanced. We soon subdued the fire, but the shock so alarmed my mother and sisters that my father discovered that he must render their lives unhappy if he remained longer a resident on the frontiers. He therefore purchased a tract of land below Lexington, in a tolerably thick-settled part of the country, to which he removed his family. Even here we were not secure, for the Indians came several times and stole horses, and at one time took six of his, when we pursued and overtook them at their encampment on the Big Island on Eagle Creek. We killed several of them and recovered our horses. A considerable snow storm had fallen, and the Indians, judging we could not discover their track, felt perfectly safe. Several other attempts of the kind, about this time, shared the same fate.

But in August, 1788, a party of them came over and tomahawked and scalped some of Colonel Johnson's negroes, at or near the Great Crossings of the Elkhorn, and stole some of Capt. Lyman Buford's horses. I did not get notice of this before 10 o'clock next day, and as our horses were always running at large in the woods when not actually in use, by the time I had hunted them up and returned, it was fully the middle of the day. My brother and I lost no time in saddling two of them and setting out. We heard that a large party of our men had taken the Indian trail early that morning and was in close pursuit of them. We, knowing the

direction the Indians generally took when they had committed depredations on the white settlements in that part of Kentucky, and being well acquainted with the woods between us and the Ohio River, having pursued them often before, and being well mounted on fleet horses, took a course which we did not doubt would intersect their trail before they would reach the Ohio. Indeed, we had strong hopes of striking the trail before any of the pursuing party would be able to overtake them, fearing nothing for ourselves if the party did not amount to more than five or six persons. However, about sundown, or perhaps nearer dark, we struck the trail in sight of some of the men in pursuit. As we came up we asked how far the front of the party was ahead, to which the reply was four or five miles. We passed them, and kept on passing men every few hundred yards, until we caught up with the foremost, several hours after night, when I found Captain Stucker groping out the trail. Dismounting, he and I gave up our horses to some of the men behind us to lead, and we kept the trail on foot. About 3 o'clock in the morning we found that the ground over which the Indians had passed was very hard and gave no traces of the horses' feet. We had hoped that the horses of their own accord would follow the track if left to their own guidance, as they sometimes do; but they, being jaded with a hard ride of more than sixty miles, appeared rather disposed to bite the bushes and browse about, so we concluded to give them some corn we had carried with us for that purpose, and get some rest for ourselves till daylight, when we got up to the trail and started onward. The Indians led us a very circuitous route, so that it was 3 o'clock in the afternoon when we reached the river. At the moment we struck it, on looking up stream we perceived a small barge appearing in sight; and waiting until she reached us, the men on board were at first alarmed and bore off for the Indian shore, but directly seeing we were white men and spoke English, rounded to. The party proved to be Captain Ward and three other men, from Pittsburgh, and, on finding out our business, Ward and one of his men agreed to unite with our party. While the men were getting ready, Captain Stucker and myself were sent across in the boats to take the trail and follow it out from the river for a mile or two and see if the Indians had not camped back of the bottom to rest themselves. We did so, and by the time we got back to the river the volunteers

that had turned out for the chase had all got over, to the number of twenty-seven, leaving their horses with the remainder of the men—about sixty—on the Kentucky shore, to wait for our return.

Colonel Robert Johnson assumed the command of our little party. We had not traveled far before he called a halt, and ordered Captain Stucker to slip out to the left a few paces, detailing eight men to follow him, directing Captain Samuel Grant, with eight more under his command, to do so to the right, remaining himself in the center with eight more, the residue of the party. Addressing himself to the men, "Now, boys," said he, "every man sees his officer, and when we come in view of the enemy Captain Grant will file off to the right, Captain Stucker to the left, and I shall keep the center. Each man will follow his officer and obey his orders. In the meantime we will march single file until we get sight of the Indians. Captain Stucker and Mr. Lytle will keep in advance of the party fifty or sixty yards, and when they discover the enemy, will either halt till we come up, or return to meet and advise us of the situation of things."

We pursued on until some time in the night, when the thick and lofty character of the timber and its dense foliage rendered it so extremely dark that it was impossible to keep the trail, and compelled us to lay down till daybreak. At the first glimpse of dawn we were all up, and reprimed our guns, for fear that our priming had become moistened during the night. We marched on, and had not traveled more than half a mile before we heard bells down in the valley below us, and, advancing nearer, we discovered the horses that had been belled, in front of the rest, and feeding quietly on the bottom pastures. At the same moment we observed an Indian approaching us. Captain Stucker and myself both squatted down; the men about forty yards behind us followed our example. The Indian kept on within a few steps of where we lay hid in the high weeds, and inclined a little to the right, as we supposed, to go to the horses that were at hand feeding; but he went on past them, as we discovered, and kept his course till he had gone out of sight. We then knew that he had gone out to hunt, and we got up and followed his back track until we came in sight of the encampment. After waiting to let the entire party come up, Captain Stucker signed to Captain Grant to file off to the right, while Stucker moved to the left, their men following them, as had

already been arranged. But Johnson, instead of getting his men to follow him in the center, directed Captain Patterson to take the men and lie watching the horses that we had just passed, so as to be ready to fire on the Indians in case they should attempt to escape by means of the horses. This order was given without the knowledge of either Grant or Stucker or any of their party, Johnson being behind us, and giving Patterson his directions in a low voice, and signing to his own men to follow Patterson, while he himself kept on after Grant.

I stepped on in front of Stucker, he and his party following me, until I led them quite around from the south to the west, or rather northwest side of the Indians, so that when Johnson would fire on them from the south, and Grant from the east, the enemy would be driven directly where we lay concealed in ambush to receive them. Where we halted happened to be close on the high bank of a branch. The Indians had ten large camps, besides some tents, the nearest of which was about forty steps from us, and they extended from this point up towards where we expected Grant's and Johnson's parties to give the signal by firing on them. There were two or three squaws cutting wood by the camps, and three or four stout lads that came down with brass kettles, dipping water from the branch directly under us and carrying it to the camps. At this moment Captain Grant fired on them from the right. The women and children and about forty warriors broke from their camps, running toward us. We sprang across the creek, from the high bank that we had squatted down upon, and, rushing up to them, the first warrior I met was a remarkably large Indian, at whose breast I presented my gun, which, to my great mortification, missed fire. Whether it was Stucker that was behind me I dared not look back to see, but the next man in my rear, whoever he was, shot him down. I instantly made ready at a warrior I observed taking aim at one of Capt. Grant's men, of the name of Hastings, but his gun fired first. When mine cracked I saw the Indian pitch forward on his face, the gun dropping from his hands. I then looked to see the effect of his fire upon Hastings, and saw the poor fellow stagger and fall. At that moment two Indians took hold of the one I had shot down, one under each arm, and dragged him from the field. I was reloading as fast as possible, and asked the man just behind me if his gun was charged, and on his replying it

was, "Then," said I, "shoot down one of those fellows dragging away the dead Indian." He instantly fired and wounded him. They both dropped the dead body, and the unwounded one caught the other by the arm and dragged him off the field.

While thus engaged I had taken a tree a little in advance of our men, but young Mr. Grant and Mr. Garrard coming up at this moment, and finding them considerably exposed to the enemy's fire, I gave them up the tree, and having got the powder and ball down my gun, was just priming, when, turning my head a little to the right, I saw three guns presented at me within less than ten steps. I jumped back at the moment the blaze appeared from the muzzles of the pieces. I felt I was wounded, but still hoped I had been too quick for them and that the wounds were not mortal, although they had all three hit me. However, I had no time to examine the wounds, and my whole thought was to retaliate. The Indians ran about fifteen or twenty steps after they fired at me, and made a short pause. The middle one looked around to see if I had been brought to the ground, but as he turned I heard him give the word of command, and, although it was in Indian, it was an audible and deep-toned voice. As I raised my rifle she appeared to be uncommonly heavy, but it was necessary to be in a hurry, as the Indians are very quick in their motions, especially in action. He stood quarterly, with his naked left breast exposed. I aimed for his nipple, as I knew a shot in that direction would pass out under his right shoulder. The fellow dropped at the report of the rifle. Captain Stucker was a few paces from me, on my left, at the time, and observed, if I aimed at that fellow's left nipple, I must have made a center shot. Stucker then asked me if I was badly wounded. I told him I believed not, but had not time to examine. He then asked me if we had not better force through them and unite with Johnson and Grant. I replied that we were better where we were : that now we had the enemy between our fires, and when they treed to fight one they exposed themselves to the fire of the other, and that from the number of dead and wounded they were running off the field, would shortly retreat. "But they fight hard, sir, and appear greatly over our numbers. There is another reason why we should retain our present position, if possible ; if we force them from this, you force them back upon their dead and wounded. Now, sir, if you will spare me a few of these men, I

will try and cut my way through that guard and destroy their wounded, and I will assure you the day is our own if I succeed in this attempt." Captain Stucker told me to try it. I then ordered three men to follow me. This was a small force to attack the life guard of the wounded Indians, which I knew must be twenty strong at least; but as I discovered the guard was placed about thirty steps in the rear of the wounded, my object was to get around and destroy the wounded before the guard would discover us, and then to fall on the back of the guard whilst they were engaged fighting Stucker.

Just as I was passing the guard I came upon a wounded Indian who had his thigh broken and had hid himself in the weeds and grass, and, keeping my eye on one side of the enemy, I did not discover him on the other until I saw the smoke rise in my face, and, dropping, found my breast within six inches of the muzzle of his gun, which had been flashed at me but failed to discharge. We despatched him, but by this time the guard discovered us and gave us a heavy fire, they being in a much greater force than I expected. I then directed my little band to follow me, and passed directly in front of the guard, whilst we received the fire of each warrior as we passed him. This, however, did no other execution than to mow down the grass and weeds through which we ran. We finally found ourselves in the rear of the division that was fighting Stucker, who did not discover us, as they lay ambuscaded behind logs and trees, until we got so near as to powder-burn each other. Stucker at this moment discovered our situation and came to our relief, when the Indians left us in possession of the field.

About this time Captain Grant had fallen, and Colonel Johnson ordered the men composing Grant's command down to join Stucker, leaving the Indians in possession of the ground they occupied, on and near the top of a very high hill. With this addition to our force we pursued our retreating party of the enemy a few hundred yards, but to no purpose. We then returned to the Indian encampment, where the men, or at least numbers of them, turned in and plundered the camps, there being upwards of twenty thousand dollars' worth of goods there which the Indians had taken out of boats attacked a short time before in the Ohio River. I had just seized a chunk to set the goods on fire, when Captain Patterson, with the eight men Colonel Johnson had committed to his charge,

came up, and for the first time, and to my great astonishment, I found out that they had not been in the action at all.

At this moment one of Grant's men told me he expected that the Indians with whom they had been engaged and had left in possession of the ground at the top of the hill would shortly fire down upon us. "Why," said I, "is it possible you left the Indians that you were fighting in possession of the field?" "Yes," said he, "Johnson ordered us down to join Stucker as soon as Grant fell." I looked up and could see the high weeds shaking in forty places, and saw that the Indians were extending their line as fast as reinforcements came in, and that they were preparing to give us battle once more.

Just as I was observing these movements young Grant came up and asked me if I was able to go with him up the hill and bring down his brother. "My dear sir," said I, "your brother is dead, and Johnson has left the Indians they were fighting in possession of the field, and they are now preparing for another attack, and will fire on us in less than ten minutes. You must not think of throwing away your life for revenge only." He replied he could never go home without seeing his brother once more. "Well, sir," I observed, "if you insist on it I will go with you, but we shall never come back if we go." He still insisted on it, and we set out on foot. As we were passing the camps at the foot of the hill, seeing Colonel Johnson on horse, I went directly up to him and told him of the mad determination of Moses Grant, and begged him to form the men and prepare for action, and let us march up and rout those Indians he had left in possession of the field of battle. I represented to him that the men were all in confusion, and plundering the camps; that we should be fired on in less than five minutes, and if they were attacked in the present position of things they must all be cut to pieces. Johnson appeared bewildered, or rather unmanned, and I could get no reply from him. At this moment Captain Sterrett came riding up to me on an Indian pony, with a tug halter on it, and leading another. He jumped off his horse, took hold of me as I was ascending the hill with Grant, and made me get on the little horse. Turning his head down hill, "There," said he, "ride down to the camp, and some of the men who are plundering will tie up your wounds, or you will bleed to death." I found myself by this time getting

very faint, and so I reined my horse alongside of a beech tree, which I leaned my head against to steady myself from falling off. My face was turned towards the hill, where I saw Grant, with Sterrett and Gregory, his two companions, ride up to the very weeds I had seen shaken by the Indians not three minutes before, when a tremendous fire opened upon them, and all three of the men fell down before my eyes, appearing, as they went down, to be completely enveloped in smoke. A portion of the Indians fired down at us at the same time, and one of the balls lodged in the beech tree against which I was leaning, and forced off a piece of the bark, which struck me a severe skite on the cheek and brought me to, from my fainting fit.

Johnson then ordered a retreat. By this time most of the men had caught Indian horses, and, having mounted, they broke and away they went in considerable disorder. I followed, as a matter of course, but at some distance in the rear, and frequently looked back to see if I could discover any one of the three poor fellows trying to escape, when at length I got a glimpse of Captain Sterrett. I hallooed to Captain Stucker, who was about—

At this point the personal narrative breaks off. The story is completed by the following taken from the *Western General Advertiser*, published in Cincinnati by Charles Cist, in the number of April 14, 1844.

"Overpowered by numbers, the whole detachment of Kentuckians who survived this hard fought contest, made their way, not without fresh loss, to the river. Feats of bravery & desperation were exhibited in this battle, known since by the name of Grant's defeat, from the death of the two officers of that name, who were engaged in it, which can hardly be matched even in our early border warfare.

"The Indians numbered nearly four to one. In the struggle, Lytle, then hardly seventeen years of age, had both his arms broken, his face powder-burnt, his hair singed to the roots, and nineteen bullets passed through his body and clothing. In this condition, a retreat being ordered, he succeeded in bringing off the field several of his friends, generously aiding the wounded and exhausted by placing them on horses, while he himself ran forward in advance of the last remnant of the retreating party, to stop the only boat on the Ohio at that time, which could take them over and save them from the overwhelming force of their savage adversaries.

"On reaching the river, he found the boat in the act of putting off for the Kentucky shore. The men were reluctant to obey his demand for a delay until those still in the rear should come up—one of them declaring that 'it was better a few perish, than that all should be sacri-

ficed.' He threw the rifle which he still carried on his shoulder, over the root of a fallen tree, and swore he would shoot the first man who pulled an oar, until his friends were aboard. In this way, the boat was detained until they came up, and were safely lodged from the pursuing foe. Disdaining to take advantage personally of this result, the boat being crowded almost to dipping, he ran up the river to where some horses stood panting under the willows after their escape from the battle field, and mounting one of the strongest, forced him into the river, holding on to the mane by his teeth, until he was taken, in the middle of the stream, into the boat, bleeding and almost fainting from his wounds, by the order of his gallant captain, the lamented *Stucker*, who had observed his conduct with admiration throughout, and was resolved that such a spirit should not perish; for by this time the balls of the enemy were rattling like hail about their ears.

"The father of Col. R. M. Johnson commanded this expedition, in which were embarked the boldest spirits of that part of Kentucky; and the scene of this sanguinary struggle was on Eagle Creek, a few miles in the rear of the river at that point where Vevay is now built."



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